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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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Agency Forms Undergoing Paperwork Reduction Act Review

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) publishes a list of information collection requests under review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35). To request a copy of these requests, call (404) 639-7570 or send an email to omb@cdc.gov. Send written comments to CDC Desk Officer, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC or by fax to (202) 395-5806. Written comments should be received within 30 days of this notice.

Proposed Project

NCHS Questionnaire Design Research Laboratory (QDRL)
2012-2014, OMB No. 0920-0222 expiration 3/31/2013) --
Revision -- National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS),
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Background and Brief Description

Section 306 of the Public Health Service (PHS) Act (42 U.S.C. 242k), as amended, authorizes that the Secretary of Health and Human Services (DHHS), acting through NCHS, shall undertake and support (by grant or contract) research, demonstrations, and evaluations respecting new or improved methods for obtaining current data to support statistical and epidemiological activities for the purpose of improving the effectiveness, efficiency, and quality of health services in the United States.

The Questionnaire Design Research Laboratory (QDRL) conducts questionnaire development, pre-testing, and evaluation activities for CDC surveys (such as the NCHS National Health Interview Survey, OMB No. 0920-0214) and other federally sponsored surveys. NCHS is requesting 3 years of OMB Clearance for this generic submission.

The QDRL conducts cognitive interviews, focus groups, usability tests, field tests/pilot interviews, and experimental research in laboratory and field settings, both for applied questionnaire development and evaluation as well as more basic research on response errors in surveys.

QDRL Staff use various techniques to evaluate interviewer administered, self-administered, telephone,

Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI), Computer Assisted Self-Interviewing (CASI), Audio Computer-Assisted Self-Interviewing (ACASI), and web-based questionnaires.

The most common questionnaire evaluation method is the cognitive interview. The interview structure consists of respondents first answering a draft survey question and then providing textual information to reveal the processes involved in answering the test question. Specifically, cognitive interview respondents are asked to describe how and why they answered the question as they did. Through the interviewing process, various types of question-response problems that would not normally be identified in a traditional survey interview, such as interpretive errors and recall accuracy, are uncovered. By conducting a comparative analysis of cognitive interviews, it is also possible to determine whether particular interpretive patterns occur within particular sub-groups of the population. Interviews are generally conducted in small rounds of 20-30 interviews; ideally, the questionnaire is re-worked between rounds, and revisions are tested iteratively until interviews yield relatively few new insights.

In addition to its traditional QDRL activities, NCHS is requesting approval for a large field test that will be

conducted in 2012. This is a 5,000-case test which involves testing the use of ACASI in the full National Health Interview Survey (NHIS). The ACASI content included in the 5,000-case test is consistent with the content studied in two smaller approved tests. The module includes questions on sexual identity, alcohol consumption, HIV testing, mental health, height and weight, sleep, and financial worries. The objective of asking a question on sexual identity in the NHIS is to fill the gaps that exist in the state of knowledge about the general health behaviors, health status, and health care utilization of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) persons.

The 5,000-case test will include one or more built-in experiments to assess the impact of ACASI, and components of ACASI, on prevalence estimates and data quality. First and foremost, test cases will be randomly assigned to receive the above described questions in either CAPI or ACASI. In particular, prevalence estimates for the sexual identity questions will be compared by mode of administration. Since a documented advantage of ACASI is the enhanced level of privacy it affords, we anticipate higher prevalence estimates of sexual minorities (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender persons) from this mode of administration. Estimates for sensitive items on mental

health, alcohol consumption, HIV testing, height and weight, financial worries, and others will also be compared.

Cognitive interviewing is inexpensive and provides useful data on questionnaire performance while minimizing respondent burden. Cognitive interviewing offers a detailed depiction of meanings and processes used by respondents to answer questions—processes that ultimately produce the survey data. As such, the method offers an insight that can transform understanding of question validity and response error. Documented findings from these studies represent tangible evidence of how the question performs. Such documentation also serves CDC data users, allowing them to be critical users in their approach and application of the data.

Similar methodology has been adopted by other federal agencies, as well as by academic and commercial survey organizations. There are no costs to respondents other than their time. The total estimated annual burden hours are 9450.

Estimated Annualized Burden Hours

Projects	Number of Respondents	Responses Per Respondent	Average Burden Per Response (in hours)
QDRL Interviews	9000	1	1
Focus groups	300	1	1.5

Kimberly S. Lane,
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